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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4114
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 4012
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 0598
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE 0075
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE 0241
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0432
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE 1433
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA IMMEDIATE 0103
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0590

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 000930

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [IR](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: FORMIN WIRAJUDA GRILLED OVER UNSC IRAN VOTE

REF: A. 06 JAKARTA 1176 (INDONESIA'S LEGISLATURE: FEW
ACCOMPLISHMENTS)

[1](#)B. 05 JAKARTA 10197 (INDONESIA'S PARLIAMENT
UNDERPERFORMS)

Classified By: John A. Heffern, Charge d'affaires. Reason: 1.4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary. On March 29, Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda defended Indonesia's vote in support of UNSCR 1747 before a hostile parliamentary committee. Despite Wirajuda's thorough explanation of the GOI's decision and the purpose of the resolution, the legislators accused him of abetting an aggressive and unjust U.S. policy towards Iran. There is a move afoot in parliament to convoke President Yudhoyono to explain the matter further. End summary

[1](#)2. (SBU) After several days' outcry from Indonesian Muslim leaders and politicians over the GOI's vote in support of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1747 tightening sanctions on Iran in response to its uranium enrichment program, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda was convoked to explain the matter before the House Of Representatives (DPR) Commission I (Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Information). The hearing took place on the evening of March 29. Separately, a petition of parliamentarians to interpellate President Yudhoyono on the same subject had reportedly gathered almost 200 signatures.

Wirajuda Makes His Case

[1](#)3. (SBU) Following a welcome and preliminaries from commission chairman Theo Sambuaga, Foreign Minister Wirajuda, appearing with a phalanx of no fewer than 25 Foreign Ministry functionaries, began his presentation to the committee. Framing the issue, Wirajuda said that the problem was Iran's non-compliance with its commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to the IAEA. Iran, he said, had freely entered into these arrangements, as had Indonesia and any number of other countries who are developing nuclear power for peaceful purposes. If Iran truly had nothing to hide, he said, it should agree to IAEA inspections.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Wirajuda then said that the GOI's approach to the dispute had been consistent. Indonesia, he said, had taken every opportunity to press for a negotiated settlement. This was the reason for Indonesia's abstention in last February's IAEA Board of Governors vote. This had also been Indonesia's

direct message to Iran. During President Ahmadinejad's visit to Jakarta last May, Wirajuda noted, President Yudhoyono had urged him to honor its IAEA commitments and to engage in serious negotiations, expanding the talks to include countries such as Russia, China, South Africa and Indonesia if necessary. Yudhoyono had also urged this approach during his recent travels in the Middle East.

15. (SBU) Despite these efforts, the negotiations broke down, and the matter came before the Security Council, in accordance with previous UNSC resolutions. Even then, Wirajuda said, the GOI had attempted to fashion a resolution that was conducive to a negotiated outcome. He pointed out that UNSCR 1747 was not wholly punitive; Annex II contained positive incentives for Iran's compliance. Foreign Minister Wirajuda said that he believed that a negotiated resolution was still possible. Both North Korea and Libya had been the subjects of UNSCRs, he noted, and yet were able to negotiate on the international community's concerns about their nuclear programs.

16. (SBU) Wirajuda also defended the GOI's role in shaping the resolution. Indonesia, he said, had not been a mere rubber stamp for the P-5 powers. Indonesia, together with South Africa and Qatar, had participated actively both in crafting the resolution and engaging in intensive dialogue with Tehran in an effort to find a last-minute compromise that would obviate the need for a UNSCR. Indonesia had insisted on language calling for a Mideast Nuclear Free Zone, recalling the right of all states to develop nuclear power for peaceful purposes, and urging all states, whether nuclear or non-nuclear, to fully honor their commitments under the NPT.

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Legislators Pile On

17. (SBU) Chairman Sambuaga the opened the floor to statements by Commission members, seventeen of whom had requested floor time. The tone of the debate was polite but uniformly critical. Abdillah Toha of the National Mandate Party (PAN), which is widely seen as having Islamist leanings, led the charge with a 20-minute attack. Like every other speaker, Toha saw the problem as Indonesia having sided with the United States against Iran. He ignored the fact that Russia and China had also supported the resolution, something that Wirajuda had explicitly pointed out in his opening statement. Toha, who many months ago had accompanied House Speaker Agung Laksono on a visit to Iran, said that the GOI's vote was not defensible in terms of national interest, ethics, public sentiment, or constitutional mandate. He warned that pursuing a foreign policy that was at variance with strong public sentiment created a risk to domestic stability.

18. (SBU) Permadi (Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle, PDI-P, which is nationalistic but generally secular in its outlook) called the resolution discriminative, sounding a theme that was echoed by other speakers. Contrasting the case of Iran with North Korea, he said that the U.S. was willing to negotiate with North Korea because it was a poor, small country. In the Middle East, however, the U.S. takes a much tougher line against any country that takes steps to deter potential Israeli aggression. By voting for the UNSCR, Permadi said, Indonesia was enabling U.S. aggression. He demanded to know why the GOI did not simply abstain.

19. (SBU) Andi Ghalib, of the Islamist United Development Party (PPP), articulated another concern taken up by other Commission members. He recalled that the U.S. invasion of Iraq had been preceded by a succession of UNSCRs and charges concerning that country's WMD programs. Indonesia, he said, should not be an accomplice to a similar strategy against Iran.

¶10. (SBU) Several speakers charged that by supporting the UNSCR, Yudhoyono and Wirajuda were ignoring the 1945 Constitution's mandate that Indonesia pursue an "independent and active" (i.e., non-aligned) foreign policy. Indonesia, they said, should have formed a bloc with South Africa, Qatar, and China to block the resolution and offer an alternative approach.

¶11. (SBU) Other parliamentarians, including Yorrys Raweyai (Golkar) and Effendy Choirie (National Awakening Party, PKB) raised concerns about accountability and transparency in foreign affairs decision-making. They said that on sensitive matters such as the Iran question, the government should consult with Parliament beforehand, not after the fact. Andreas Pereira (PDI-P) said that the government's decision-making process had been a mysterious "black box." President Yudhoyono, Pereira continued, had accepted a phone call from President Bush shortly before the UNSCR debate, and the Indonesian public needed to know whether this had influenced Indonesia's UNSCR vote.

Next Up: SBY?

¶12. (C) Discussion continues on whether to interpellate President Yudhoyono himself on this issue. A member of SBY's own Cabinet, Minister for Cooperatives and Small- and Medium Sized Enterprises Suryadharma Ali, told the press he supported this idea. In comments to the press, DPR Speaker Agung Laksono cautioned that once started, the Parliament must follow through on the process. He recalled that an earlier attempt to interpellate the President on the issue of malnutrition and rice distribution had fizzled, tarnishing the DPR's credibility. At the Commission I meeting, Chairman Sambuaga said that the petition of legislators to interpellate Yudhoyono now had almost 200 signatures. Many speakers at the hearing stated that this step was necessary, since Wirajuda's testimony had been "too technical" or otherwise insufficient. DPR member Yorrys, getting way ahead of himself, warned that if the President's explanation was

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unsatisfactory, it could lead to his impeachment. A palace official told us March 30 that they expect to be able to block the interpellation.

Comment

¶13. (C) Indonesian politicians are often suspicious about (if not hostile toward) U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East; they may be sincerely sympathetic to Iran, a country few if any of them know well, perceiving it as a victim of U.S. bullying. However, we suspect that most of the hostility expressed toward the administration's actions at the UNSC is motivated by partisan desires to spin any issue simply to erode Yudhoyono's domestic standing. Politicians may see Indonesia's foreign policy vis--vis Iran as providing an easy opportunity to criticize the Yudhoyono administration, but we doubt their complaints will resonate strongly with the general public.

¶14. (C) The DPR as an institution remains inefficient and extremely slow at the actual business of legislation (reftels). Nevertheless, episodes like this one show how in the post-Suharto era, it is attempting to hold Ministers and even the President accountable, thereby setting up a nascent system of checks and balances.

HEFFERN